



FACE Program Fact Sheet

Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation

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TWO FATALITIES RESULT FROM IMPROPER USE OF TRACTORS DURING TREE REMOVAL

BACKGROUND

The Wisconsin Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (FACE) Program received reports of 91 fatal occupational injuries during 1999. Two of those incidents occurred when a part-time logger and a part-time cherry farmer used improper equipment for tree removal.

This fact sheet describes the incidents and requests that employers who use tractors bring the following recommendations to the attention of tractor operators.

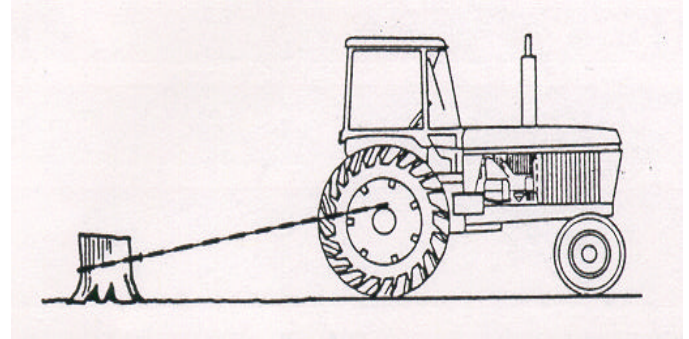
THE INCIDENTS

Incident #1

A 56-year-old male part-time logger died while trying to push over a dead tree with a tractor when he was knocked off the tractor and pinned under the rear tire. The victim was operating a farm tractor with a front bucket attachment to knock down and remove trees. He elevated the bucket until it was about ten feet high, then struck the trunk of a decayed tree with the bucket. The tree did not fall, so he struck it again with the bucket. This time, the top half of the tree cracked off and fell toward the victim sitting in the tractor seat. He was knocked from the seat and fell in front of the right rear tractor tire. The tractor came to rest with the tire on his chest.

Incident #2

A 49-year-old male part-time farmer died when the tractor he was using to uproot a small tree overturned on him. The victim was clearing an old cherry orchard that was no longer used for commercial purposes, to prepare the property for other uses. The victim attached a chain to the base of a small cherry tree, and the other end to the base of the operator's seat. He was in the



operator's seat, and apparently accelerated the tractor to pull on the tree. The tractor flipped over backwards, and the farmer was pinned between the seat and the ground. His tractor was not fitted with ROPS.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To prevent similar occurrences, farm tractor operators should:

- follow tractor and bucket loader manufacturers' recommendations when using a bucket.
- follow manufacturer's recommendations for proper hitching techniques when using a tractor for pulling objects.
- use tractors that are equipped with falling object protective structures (FOPS) when working in a situation where objects might fall on the operator.
- use tractors that are equipped with rollover protective structures (ROPS) and seatbelts.

The Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services, in agreement with the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) conducts research on occupational fatalities. The Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (FACE) Program focuses on identifying factors that increase the risk of work-related fatal injuries. The Wisconsin FACE Program helps in the development and use of improved safety measures for preventing fatal work injuries.

PLEASE POST

FACE information is produced and distributed to provide current, relevant education on methods to prevent severe work-related injuries.

If you have comments or questions, please call the FACE Project at 608/266-7298, or write:

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